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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8611
INFO RUEHXS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS PRIORITY
RUCNISL/ISLAMIC COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 4895
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 2289
RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE 3384
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 1773
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 2507
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 2562
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 000719

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DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS, EAP/PD, DRL/AWH, EEB/CIP/BA
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USTR FOR K.EHLERS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KPAO](#) [ECPS](#) [EINT](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: C-D18-00223: INDONESIA BLOCKS YOUTUBE, MYSPACE,
OVER ANTI-ISLAMIC FILM

REF: A. JAKARTA 717

[1](#)B. JAKARTA 674

[1](#)C. JAKARTA 655

[1](#)D. STATE 20822

[1](#)1. (U) This message is Sensitive but Unclassified. Please
protect the business sensitive information in paras 4-5.

[1](#)2. (SBU) SUMMARY: The GOI beginning April 8 ordered
internet service providers in Indonesia to block YouTube,
MySpace, and a handful of other websites containing the
anti-Islamic film "Fitna." The Ministry of Communication and
Information ordered that the sites be blocked in Indonesia
until the sites themselves removed the film. Critics saw
this as a move that, if continued, would hamper the free flow
of information. The GOI took the step in order to get out in
front of concerns sparked by the film's release. Mission is
concerned by the action and will discuss it with GOI
interlocutors. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)3. (U) GOI TEMPORARILY BANS WEBSITES: On April 8,
Indonesia's internet service providers blocked at least eight
websites showing the anti-Islamic film "Fitna" in response to
an order issued last week by the Ministry of Communication
and Information. The GOI took the action so that no one in
Indonesia can view the anti-Islamic film "Fitna."

[1](#)4. (SBU) LETTER TO YOUTUBE: On April 9, Jake Hubert of
Google's Asian Government Affairs office told econoff that
YouTube received a letter from Communication and Information
Minister Mohammad Nuh on April 3. The letter requested
YouTube to take down 3,000 "Fitna" videos found on the
website. (Note: a search for "Fitna" on the YouTube site
produced 3,070 hits, the vast majority of which are
commentary and not video or excerpts of video.) The letter
also threatened that the Ministry will instruct Indonesian
internet service providers to block the YouTube website until
all 3,000 videos are taken down.

[1](#)5. (SBU) A CASE FOR DIALOGUE: Later that day, Google's
Director of Public Policy Andrew McLaughlin held a phone
conference with Director General of Information Technology

Cahyana Ahmadjayadi to discuss the issue. Google representatives told Ahmadjayadi that "blocking YouTube was not the way to resolve this" and moreover, there was a genuine dialogue taking place on the website about the "Fitna" film, including a large number of critics of the film.

¶6. (SBU) Google representatives also said they would follow local law regarding the issue and that their local counsel was still researching it. Hubert told us, "We're not acknowledging that the 'Fitna' video violates Indonesian law." In response to the letter, Google has asked the Ministry to provide a complete list of videos that they want YouTube to block. Hubert described the meeting as positive and said, "We do feel we're making good progress. We've opened a line of communication." Google has requested a follow up meeting with either Nuh or Ahmadjayadi and, as of April 9, they were waiting for a response.

¶7. (SBU) REASONS FOR CONCERN FOR MEDIA FREEDOM: Media advocates condemned the government's request to block access to the websites, seeing the action as governmental control of access to information. The Indonesian Constitution protects public access to information and all means of communication. Advocates said the government is restricting this right by blocking the websites, albeit temporarily. In protest, the Independent Journalists Alliance (AJI) called for the Information Minister to resign.

¶8. (SBU) The GOI took the step in order to get out in front of concerns sparked by the film's release among some Muslim groups (see reftels). Mission is concerned by the action and will discuss it with GOI interlocutors. In an odd juxtaposition, the GOI move to limit media freedom comes at the same time that the GOI passed a new Freedom of

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Information Act which increases public access to government information (ref A).

HUME